Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Annual Accountability Report For the Fiscal Year 2000/01

Includes the former Departments of
Housing and Municipal Affairs
and
Business and Consumer Services

NOVA SCOTIA
Service Nova Scotia
and Municipal Relations

October 17, 2001

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3. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The accountability report of the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations for the year ended March 31, 2001, is prepared pursuant to the Financial Measures Act (2000).The Act requires the reporting of outcomes against department business plan information for the fiscal year. The reporting of Department outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by department management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of department management. The report represents, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in Department business plans for the year.

Hon. Angus MacIsaac,
Minister

Brian Stonehouse, P. Eng
Deputy Minister

4. MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

The year 2000/01 was one of change and adjustment for the staff of what is now Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR).The new Department was created in October 2000 by merging the former Department of Business and Consumer Services and the municipal affairs responsibilities of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

Throughout the transition of creating a new Department, pursuit of our operational goals and customer service improvements continued unabated. That this restructuring took place while maintaining the Department's high customer service standards is a tribute to the dedication of Department staff.

SNSMR is making significant progress in advancing the government's priorities. Through partnerships with other government organizations, we are developing new ways of providing improved service to Nova Scotians. The Nova Scotia Business Registry is just one example of how the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia joining forces to offer a better and more efficient service to their business customers. During the period covered by this report, the Department made a number of on-line information services and transactions available to the public.

In the coming years, the Department will continue developing new and better ways of serving the public while fulfilling its mandate of playing a leading role in the provincial-municipal relations.

Hon Angus MacIsaac

5. IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING

The success of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is dependent upon the continuous evolution of the organizational structure to respond to changing priorities of customers, customer groups, government, and stakeholders. The Department is committed to continually re-evaluating the structure.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is structured in five Divisions:

- Registry and Information Management Services, led by Nancy Vanstone
- Program Management and Corporate Services, led by Greg Keefe
- Service Delivery, led by Graham Poole
- Municipal Services, led by Dave Darrow
- Alternative Program Delivery, led by John MacKay

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations success is dependent upon responding to customer and stakeholder needs. As a result, the organizational structure will be dynamic, changing to respond to newly identified priorities.

The Department has developed an organizational chart for the year 2001/02 (see Supplemental Information, section 8), but fully recognizes that the chart will be revisited regularly to ensure that it is effective and appropriate to meet identified priorities. This structure is consistent with the original plan for Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, in that we are designed to be the leader in e-government, responsive to customers, and explore options for innovative delivery of government services; ever changing issues.

Under the former Departments of Business and Consumer Services and Housing and Municipal Affairs, the units were primarily organized by program. With the new Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, we are structured according to expertise and centres of excellence in program management/corporate services, service delivery, municipal relations, registry and information management, and alternate program delivery. Each of these functions has a subject matter expertise and brings a specific set of skills and attributes that allows for enhanced service to customers.

Transition to the new structure has begun with the move of Financial Institutions to Environment and Labour and Housing Services to Community Services. Internally, the following moves have been made:

- Business Licensing has moved from Service Delivery to Program Management and Corporate Services
- Order in Council Appointments are moving from Service Delivery to Program Management and Corporate Services, including Registrar of Motor Vehicles, Director of Residential Tenancies, Registrar of Condominiums, Superintendent of Real Estate and Director of Consumer Services.
- Nova Scotia Business Registry has moved from Program Management and Corporate Services to Registry and Information Management Services
- Vital Statistics has moved from Service Delivery to Registry and Information Management Services.

After the interdepartmental movements, the Department had a financial budget of $109,500,000 and a full time equivalent (FTE) count of 957.

The creation of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations was to respond to customer and stakeholder requests for streamlined and accessible government services, and not as a cost reduction exercise. Small savings were realized, however, related to the consolidation of two Deputy offices and two Policy divisions. As electronic initiatives like the Nova Scotia Business Registry and Registry 2000 projects improve the electronic access to data, fiscal savings will be re-invested to support further access improvements.

The physical infrastructure of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has not changed. However, the Department is committed to evaluating opportunities to consolidate offices and streamline the physical presence in communities. These opportunities will be evaluated incrementally, as leases expire and space requirements dictate.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has implemented an enhanced service delivery presence in rural Nova Scotia. Three full-service Registry of Motor Vehicles counters were added in Shelburne, Guysborough, and Liverpool in March, 2001.

In addition, improved availability of electronic access to services were installed in March in nine Registry of Deeds offices in Amherst, Pictou, Port Hood, Baddeck, Guysborough, Shelburne, Liverpool, Weymouth, and Lawrencetown in the form of a kiosk.

The Municipal Services division has been reorganized by reducing the number of sections from three to two. Responsibilities related to advice and non-monetary assistance to municipalities including advice related to administration, finance, land use planning and building code have been incorporated into the Planning and Advisory section. Responsibility for the administration of capital assistance programs, the grant-in-lieu of provincial property tax program and other financial assistance programs has been assigned to the new Grants and Programs Section.

A staff orientation session was held in September, 2000 outlining the structure of the new Department, the changes to functions, the plan and vision for the future. Since that time, the Transition Team has started a newsletter to communicate to staff on a monthly basis. In addition, an Employee Opinion Survey was released in February to gauge the opinions of staff and to determine their information priorities and preferred methods of communication. This information will be used to ensure that all staff are kept informed of upcoming changes.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is committed to maintaining open dialogue with customers and customer groups to ensure that service improvements and changes meet their expectations. The Transition Team has also started a customer/stakeholder feedback program, that includes focus sessions, individual customer interviews, on-going surveys, and the establishment of stakeholder panels for on-going two-way communication.

In summary, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is committed to both customers and employees, and to responding to their identified needs.

The Department will continue to ensure that relationships with municipalities and maintained and enhanced, that our registry data and corporate assets are secure and reliable, and that our corporate services, legislative, and program management objectives facilitate and enable quality and effectiveness.

6. DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goals and Priorities of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Goal 1 – Foster strong, effective municipalities in their delivery of local services.

Continue to file a preliminary assessment roll and information line service, continue to educate municipalities and property owners, and continue with the provincial assessment inspection program.

The 2001 preliminary assessment roll was filed with municipal units in June 2000 and 60,000 proposed notices were sent to property owners with assessment value increases greater than 3%. The 2001 assessment roll was filed in January of 2001. A call centre was in place for four weeks after the release of both the proposed and formal assessment notices. The call centre responded to approximately 75% of the inquiries. Assessors handled the remaining 25% which were valuation related. Customer satisfaction continues to be greater than 75%.

A three hour workshop on property assessment was given to 35 of the 55 municipalities involving both councillors and municipal staff.

The Provincial Assessment Inspection Program (PAIP) continued from June 2 - December 22, 2000.

Develop in partnership with municipalities a full cost-recovery program for the delivery of assessment services.

A cost recovery formula for assessment services was designed by a joint Department-Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) Committee and presented to the UNSM membership at their annual conference in September, 2000. The new funding arrangement came into effect on April 1, 2001.

Start to implement the recommendations of the Municipal-Provincial Roles and Responsibilities Review to rationalize provincial/municipal service delivery so that the right level of government is delivering the appropriate service in the most efficient, accountable, and effective manner.

Several recommendations were implemented during the year including municipalities taking over the cost of property assessment services as well as the next phase of provincially assumed funding of social housing, correctional facilities and grants in lieu of taxes for university residences, services previously funded by the municipalities. The implementation of several other key recommendations of the Roles and Responsibilities process were being negotiated with municipalities in 2000/01, including a new municipal equalization formula.

Negotiate and implement the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Works Program 3 for municipal infrastructure development.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program was signed in Halifax on October 4, 2000. It provides a cost shared agreement with the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments each contributing $65.3 million to municipal infrastructure in Nova Scotia over the next six years (2000-2006).

The Management Committee of the program agreed that approvals for the first year of the program would be limited to top priority green projects submitted by the municipalities. A January 15, 2000 call for applications resulted in over 250

applications for projects valued in excess of $253 million. Project evaluations were underway and Public Works and Government Services Canada started the environmental screening process for a number of the projects.

Implement the Inclusive Transportation Pilot Project models to better meet the transportation needs of all Nova Scotians, including those with disabilities.

The three Inclusive Transportation Pilot Projects undertaken in Yarmouth, Colchester and Antigonish/Guysborough progressed into operational modes and were expected to take them beyond the April 1, 2001 end date of the original pilot or trial period. Final reports on the pilots are expected by the end of the 2001/02 fiscal year.

From the provincial perspective, the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has reviewed the information collected from the pilots and is working on developing a community based transportation program that will address transportation service needs for communities throughout the province. The program is intended to promote the delivery and provide financial support for the operation of cost effective and sustainable community-based inclusive transportation services to communities with low population densities. Announcement of the program is anticipated in early fiscal year 2001/02.

Prepare statements of provincial interest to protect the province's resources.

Statements of provincial interest are authorised under the Municipal Government Act and are designed to protect the province's land resources and it's interest in land use planning. Five statements are currently in effect. In support of these statements, implementation guidelines and mapping have been prepared for the statements addressing drinking water supply areas, flood risk areas and agricultural lands with work underway on the statement addressing infrastructure.

Discussions are underway with other government departments regarding the preparation of statements on additional topic areas.

Support the creation of partnerships among all levels of government for the delivery of common services.

The Partners in Pubic Service (PIPS) project was initiated by the Department on behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia for the purpose of exploring opportunities to provide common support services of the broader public sector (MASH and Provincial) through shared regional entities and/ or partnership arrangements. The objective of the project is to maximize the efficiency of common support services through reduced cost and optimal resource utilization. The common support services under consideration include information technology, human resources, financial management, fleet management, building services, and procurement. Industrial Cape Breton was chosen as the pilot location for this initiative. All of the significant publically funded entities within this area have agreed to participate. To date, an extensive inventory of support service resources and priority requirements of the partners has been completed. The next phase of the project involves the development of business cases and operational models for establishing shared arrangements. Service delivery partnership opportunities are also being jointly explored by the Department and the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Implement the Community ACCESS-Ability Program to provide improved access to public buildings for all citizens.

The Community ACCESS-Ability Program was announced in May 2000. It provides financial assistance to municipalities and non-profit organizations to undertake renovations to community facilities to improve public access. It is intended to help seniors and people with disabilities to enjoy equal access to places that are the heart and soul of small communities: fire halls, community centres, libraries, museums and municipal buildings.

The program provides funding up to a maximum contribution of $10,000 per project. The program budget is $300,000 per year for four years (total $1.2 million). The first year of the program resulted in 40 project approvals, valued at the full $300,000 for that year. The Department anticipates full use of the program allocation of $300,000 for fiscal year 2001/02 as well. Applications are being received and reviewed for approval up to March 31, 2001, with approvals announced by May 1, 2001.

Goal 2 – Support the provision and maintenance of safe, adequate and affordable housing.

The priorities outlined under this goal have been transferred to the Department of Community Services.

Goal 3 – Provide integrated, accessible, current geographic information, and real and personal property registration for the benefit of all Nova Scotians.

Continue the process of reforming and modernizing the land registration system in Nova Scotia by completing Phase One of Registry 2000, which includes consultation with stakeholders, preparation of a sustainable business case and introduction of Land Titles legislation.

Phase One has been completed. Accomplishments include a province-wide stakeholder and public consultation to introduce the Registry 2000 vision of a modernized, streamlined registry system. A high level review of business functions in the new system was completed. The Department undertook a detailed analysis of the current costs of the system. It completed a consumer survey regarding the current system and proposed changes. A business case was developed which included recommendations to government regarding the Registry 2000 business plan. Approval for Phase Two and Three of the Registry 2000 project was obtained. Departmental consultations on revised land titles legislation were completed and the Department introduced a revised Land Registration Act into the House of Assembly which will provide for a guarantee of the basic ownership rights of Nova Scotians.

Review and revise, as required, the policies and the delivery of coordinate referencing and topographic geographic data, to ensure that these reflect technology and user needs; and, develop a multi-year strategy for the coordination of geographic information across the provincial government that addresses government's anticipated future requirements for geographic information.

Consulted with the Departments of Natural Resources and Transportation and Public Works, and the Nova Scotia Land Surveyors Association to reach a consensus on an appropriate coordinate referencing projection system. Issued a contract and began work to develop a five year maintenance strategy for the Nova Scotia Topographic Databases; recommendations for an implementation plan are expected by the fall of 2001. Developed a framework to undertake a five year strategy study for the GeoNOVA program and received approval to proceed in March, 2001. Negotiated provincial GIS software maintenance agreements on behalf of several provincial departments.

Protect and take advantage of the province's significant investment in primary geographic information databases by developing and implementing sustainable maintenance strategies and enhancing the databases to reflect user requirements for better and more comprehensive information such as civic addresses.

Developed a strategy and a detailed work plan to roll out civic addressing across the province; began rollout in Cumberland, Pictou, Richmond, Inverness and Victoria counties. Completed coverage of the NSTDB Coastal Series (quality control continues in 2001/02). Entered into new data exchange agreements with 10 municipalities, bringing the total to 40+ municipalities and signed agreements with 4 municipalities to participate in data linkage projects (assessment

account/property identifier match). Collected $18 million in deed transfer tax on behalf of 16 municipalities. Contracted out $1.1 million to 20 private sector geomatics companies for the acquisition/maintenance of primary geographic data. Worked with Economic Development, the federal government, local development agencies and private sector partners to develop the Target Nova Scotia unified information tool, bringing together a broad array of community profile information sourced at local, provincial and national levels. Delivered a baseline inventory and mapping for non-resident land ownership to support taxation and policy initiatives.

Goals and Priorities of Business and Consumer Affairs

Goal 1 –Provide quality, cost-effective services for government.

Complete the development of the Nova Scotia Business Registry as a system for government-wide service delivery.

The Nova Scotia Business Registry facilitates electronic service delivery for government and continues to develop the framework with which to expand its service to other government departments and agencies. Program areas within the Department are benefiting from a central processing function which ensures licences, permits, registrations and certifications are processed in a timely and efficient manner. The Nova Scotia Business Registry and its centralized processing unit makes it easier for Nova Scotians to conduct business with the government. The year 2000/01 brought many process improvements to ensure data integrity and data synchronization with the Worker's Compensation Board and Canada Customs and Revenue Agency information. Significant progress was also made in developing the web interface.

Increase the use of Access Nova Scotia Centres by exploring co-location options with other departments.

In 2000/01, Registry of Motor Vehicles transaction services were added to existing Registry of Deeds offices in Municipal Government buildings in Liverpool, Shelburne and Guysborough. Additionally, work is underway towards finding suitable locations in Hants and Richmond counties for similar co-location opportunities. Extensive planning was completed to address the integration of facilities within the merged Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. This will include co-location opportunities with other departments.

Evaluate opportunities for increasing electronic delivery of services to individuals.

The Department made significant progress on this initiative in 2000/01.Evaluation activities culminated in the completion of a business case for the implementation of on-line vehicle registration renewal, change of mailing address for Registry of Motor Vehicles, and a request for Vital Statistics certificates. By March 2001, these on-line service transactions were available for customers, and feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. An e-service action plan was also developed with a number of new on-line transactions scheduled for 2001-02.

Expand the capacity of the Department's Telephone Information Centre to handle inquiries for all Departmental programs and evaluate opportunities for handling calls for other departments.

In 2000/01, the Department's Telephone Information Centre assumed responsibility for providing telephone response for the Family Assistance Program and the Fuel Assistance Program. Significant work was also completed in support of transferring telephone calls associated with Vital Statistics and Property Assessment inquiries to the Department's Telephone Information Centre, and these areas are scheduled for implementation in 2001-02.

Integrate Departmental operations along service lines.

Business and Consumer Services had initially planned to reorganize along the lines currently in place for SNSMR, i.e. along service lines. However, this effort was superceded by and expanded upon with the merger of Housing and Municipal Affairs and Business and Consumer Services into Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations in October, 2000. This effort is outlined in more detail in section 5 of this report.

Identify ways to improve the quality of service by evaluating alternative service delivery options in a number of program areas.

The Alternate Program Division was created in October, 2000. While the Division was new, several important accomplishments were made. A review of the Assessment Service Program was initiated to determine if a business case existed for program delivery outside of government. Recommendations on the most suitable delivery model are expected in fiscal 2001-02. A review of the commercial Vehicle Compliance Program was initiated to determine the feasibility of all or part of the Program being delivered by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Recommendations are expected to be made to Government in fiscal 2001-02. Core staffing requirements and job descriptions were defined for the Division in March 20001. Significant progress was made in identifying priorities for the migration of business licences, registrations and permits from other departments for delivery by SNSMR principally through the Nova Scotia Business Registry.

Goal 2 – Make it easy for Nova Scotians to conduct business with the Government of Nova Scotia.

Review the impact of gaming regulations on community groups and make the necessary amendments to support the contributions of these organizations.

The review of changes to gaming regulations was begun in 2000/01 and continued through the year. The approvals process for lottery licenses was streamlined through administrative changes and these changes were reviewed with two stakeholder groups during the year. Further changes will be proposed in 2001-02.

Work with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency to determine the feasibility of fuel and tobacco taxes being administered by that agency.

An evaluation to harmonize the fuel and tobacco taxes currently collected separately by both the provincial and federal levels of government was undertaken during the 2000/01 fiscal year. It was determined that joint administration would be cost prohibitive and thus was not pursued any further.

Integrate delivery of services provided by Vital Statistics into those available at ANS Centres.

The Department made significant progress on this initiative in 2000/01. The conversion of the birth records was a step toward achieving this goal as was the development of an automated financial and inventory control system. The project for the development of the control system was initiated in 2000/01 with an anticipated completion date of November 2001. Vital Statistics services will be delivered at Access Nova Scotia Centres when the financial and inventory control system is completed.

Goal 3 – Ensure consumer protection and public road safety.

Complete consultation and review of the legislation for embalmers, funeral directors and services, and cemeteries.

A discussion paper was completed during the 2000/01 fiscal year for approval. Subsequently, new issues arose and the paper will have to be updated during 2001-02.

Complete amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act* resulting from a broadly based review of the *Act*, and include a provision to allow landlords to evict individuals convicted of certain criminal activities.

Stakeholder groups were consulted on proposed amendments to the *Act*. Final recommendations for legislative amendments were completed and all but two were approved in principle by the government. It is anticipated that the remaining issues will be reviewed in 2001/02.

Revise cost-of-credit disclosure legislation to achieve harmonization with other provinces.

Amendments to the *Consumer Protection Act* and *Mortgage Brokers and Lenders Registration Act* were passed in the Fall 2000 session of the Legislature. Amendments are also required to the regulations to these *Acts*, before the amendments to the Acts can be proclaimed. Staff began the process of drafting amendments to the regulations during 2000/01.

Develop a program to provide seniors who participate in safe driving programs with a 50% discount on Registry of Motor Vehicles fees.

A plan to provide seniors who participate in safe driving programs with a 50% discount on Registry of Motor Vehicle (RMV) fees was replaced, after consultation with seniors, with a plan to refund a portion of the cost of the course, rather than offer a discount on fees. The program service providers were contacted and submissions solicited and an internal policy for providing the service was developed and approved by the Department.

Increase consumer protection for TV and Internet sales.

A Federal/Provincial/Territorial working group that reports to Ministers responsible for consumer protection prepared a template for jurisdictions to use to prepare legislation to provide certain protections for consumers making purchases through the Internet. SNSMR received approval to make amendments to the Consumer Protection Act during the Fall 2001 session of the Legislature to implement the Internet protections. No further action was taken on the TV sales component during the year.

Work with the Road Safety Advisory Committee to develop measures to improve road safety in Nova Scotia.

During the year the Department recommended amendments to the *Motor Vehicle Act* with respect to:

- graduated speeding scheme
- definition of crossing guard and a penalty for failing to obey crossing requirements
- adopting an ignition interlock device
- signage on learner driver vehicles.

The Department also reviewed and approved a new training manual for crossing guards, hired a full-time coordinator for the Committee, developed an annual business plan for the Committee and recommended changes to the Driving School Regulations

Amend the Motor Vehicle Inspection program to achieve enhanced road safety at a reduced cost to government.

Amendments to the regulations were drafted for consideration by the government. The business processes for approvals of station and tester licenses were redesigned to reduce waiting times.

CORPORATE SERVICE UNITS (CSUs) ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FINANCIAL SERVICES

During 2000/01 the following key initiatives were be undertaken to support the Department of Business and Consumer Services:

The Financial Services Group will be providing financial expertise and advice to the Department in its support of the Government's objective to balance the budget and provide a 10% tax reduction over the next three years.

Created the hierarchy for the new Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. Supported Government's restructuring initiative by performing financial analysis to facilitate the accurate transfer of the related components of the Departmental budget. Provided financial information, which contributed to the preparation of the Departmental busines. plan. Provided financial analysis and advice during the development of the Departmental operating budget, ensuring Departmental targets were met.

The Financial Services Group will provide complete, timely and accurate financial information to the senior management team and the Deputy Minister.

On a monthly basis, analysed Departmental expenses and recoveries, and prepared a Monthly Forecast Report for Senior Management. Met with the Deputy Minister on a regular basis to discuss monthly forecast and other issues relating to Departmental spending. To facilitate effective decision making, ensured the accurate recording of all assets in accordance with the Tangible Capital Assets (TCA) Policy.

The Financial Services Group will continue to build and strengthen the relationships with the Department's staff to improve our understanding of the Department's business and understand our customers' needs.

Met with Senior Management on a monthly basis to discuss the Senior Management report in relation to Departmental spending against Authority/Forecast. Attended Senior Management meetings on a regular basis to exchange information. Attended strategic business planning sessions with Senior Management of the Department. Staff of the Financial CSU were members of Departmental projects, providing financial advise and assistance, e.g. the International Registration Plan (IRP) under the Service Delivery Division.

During 2000-2001 the following key initiatives were to be undertaken to support the Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Financial Services Group will be providing financial expertise and advice to the Department in its support of the Government's objective to balance the budget and provide a 10% tax reduction over the next three years.

Created the hierarchy for the new Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

Supported Government's restructuring initiative by performing financial analysis to facilitate the accurate transfer of the related components of the Departmental budget. Provided financial information, which contributed to the preparation of the Departmental business plan. Provided financial analysis and advice during the development of the Departmental operating budget, ensuring Departmental targets were met.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Partnering with other Corporate Service Units to further develop common approaches to support and sharing of resources.

The Regional Support Pilot Project was expanded from three to six Corporate Service Units and geographic coverage was broadened from the three pilot regions to include the entire province. Ten staff are now employed by the participating CSU's to deliver services to the regions.

Moving to a technology platform that allows the IT Help Desk and network team to remotely support clients as they require computer assistance.

The SNSMR Information Technology CSU has partnered with the Department of Community Services in the delivery of Network Services. The two teams have co-located at Community Services and work as a team in the delivery of services to the client departments supported by the CSU's. This has facilitated a sharing of best practices as well as standardization of common desktop and server environments across the departments. Remote support capability is now in place.

Assisting with development of new systems to improve business processes.

The CSU supported the Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs and the Department of Business and Consumer Services in a combined total of 43 initiatives to review process and make recommendations for the upgrade and/or replacement of technology. Some of the more significant initiatives include the Carrier Profile System Functional Design, tender and commencement of Phase 1 of the solution; evaluation and recommendation of a replacement for the imaging solution for the Registry of Joint Stock Companies System; definition of requirements and tendered for enhancements to the Vital Statistics System to include Inventory and Accounting Functionality; Requirements Definition and Tendered for the International Registration Plan Project; and provided support to the Registry 2000 Project and the Internet Service Delivery Project.

Cross training staff who provide systems support to mission critical systems.

A constant effort is employed by Information Technology to ensure that staff are familiarized with a variety of systems supported by the production support unit. During this time period, staff were cross trained to support the Vital Statistics system and to also support the vehicle tax system. The unit has also provided staff with the opportunity to move from RMV mainframe support to support of the Department's FoxPro and PowerBuilder PC applications. A production support staff member continues to be a valuable member of the UNYSIS team that supports the Nova Scotia Business Registry System (NSBR).

Working with clients to keep existing systems operational and enhance systems as required.

The Production Support unit has worked hand in hand with its clients to ensure that systems supported are modified or enhanced to meet current business requirements. These changes can be a result of changing business processes or legislative changes. Examples of some of the work undertaken by the Production Support Unit for this period are:

- modification of the RMV system to recognize a new amateur plate format
- RMV changes required as a result of Bill 83 which saw alcohol related offences appear on all driver abstracts for a period of 10 years
- changes to RMV to handle new driver enhancement fee structure as outlined in the 2000/2001 budget
- the implementation of additional program functionality to the Vital Statistics system which enabled the business unit to produce its annual reports
- staff also actively participated with the clients in Prioritization committee meetings to ensure required changes are prioritized and reported on
- for the Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs CSU, staff played a major role in the day to day support of the Mass Appraisal System (OASIS). These staff were also instrumental in the annual filing of the Assessment Role for the Department.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources CSU will be providing human resource services and expertise to its four client departments. Ensuring that appropriate staffing decisions are made is essential to enable its clients to meet their mandates. Other initiatives include assisting with the delivery of corporate programs. There will also be individual initiatives for each client department which will be determined as outcomes of this business planning process.

The Human Resources component of the 2000/01 Business Plan addressed the CSU's responsibility for providing HR services to each of its client departments, with specific emphasis on recruitment and selection followed by appropriate training, guidance and development. Other initiatives included participation in the delivery of various corporate programs as well as the delivery of programs specific to each of its client departments.

The CSU played a very active role throughout the year in delivering on its commitment to ensure appropriate staffing decisions were made at all levels of the client departments. Once hired, management and staff participated in orientation sessions and also periodic sessions on attendance management.

As for participation in delivering on the corporate agenda, the CSU ran sessions on performance management in both BCS and HMA. It also coordinated the delivery of sessions on "Coaching for Performance" to senior management in both departments. Some succession management sessions were also held.

Another corporate initiative the CSU was responsible for implementing was the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) program for each of our client departments. These programs were developed and implemented in both BCS and HMA with guidance and direction from our OH&S Consultant.

In addition to the above, there's been significant restructuring activity due to the merger of BCS and HMA into SNSMR. The work generated by the merger has been both interesting and challenging.

Two other initiatives (the Telework pilot project and the Affirmative Action pilot program) were identified in the HMA Business Plan as initiatives to be lead by the Department of Human Resources and supported by the CSU. Progress in each of these initiatives was slow and were being re-evaluated by the Department of Human Resources at the end of the 2000/01 fiscal year.

7. FINANCIAL RESULTS

BCS Core Businesses	Estimate 2000/01 $000s	Actual 2000/01 $000s	Variance $000s	Explanation
Senior Management Minister and Deputy office and Communications	388	191	177	Savings due to staff vacancies and related costs
Corporate Services Unit Financial Services, Human Resources and Information Technology	4,217	3,892	325	Savings due to staff vacancies, operating efficiencies and software maintenance costs lower than anticipated.
Service Delivery & Operations Administration, Metro Service Delivery, Regional Service Delivery and Operations Centre	14,184	12,184	2,000	Savings due to staff vacancies, operating efficiencies and the delay of the Registry of Motor Vehicle Project.
Revenue, Compliance and Registry Services Executive Director, Audit & Examination, Compliance, Revenue/Registry and Program Support.	9,916	12,962	(3,046)	Over expenditures are related to the approval of Release 2 of the Nova Scotia Business Registry Project which was not anticipated and the Home Heating Fuel Rebate Program which was extended past the fiscal year 99/2000.
Policy & Business Development Exec. Director, Policy and Regulatory Affairs and Business Development	2.516	2,241	275	Savings due to staff vacancies and other operating efficiencies.
Program Expenditure	31,201	31,470	(269)	
Tangible Capital Assets Adjustment	(1,227)	(1,135)	(92)	
Net Program Expenditure	29,974	30,335	(361)	

HMA Core Businesses	Estimate 2000/01 $000s	Actual 2000/01 $000s	Variance $000s	Explanation
Senior Management Minister and Deputy office, Legal Services,, Audit Services, Policy, Development & Research and Administration Support Services	2,386	2,280	106	Savings due to staff vacancies and other operating efficiencies.
Municipal Services Administration, Planning Services, Advisory Services, Municipal Grants - Operating, Municipal Grants - Capital, Municipal Grants - Taxes, Local Government Studies, Other Grants and Development Services	39,096	37,454	1,642	Savings due to staff vacancies and lower than anticipated grants in lieu of property taxes.
Land Information Services Property Registration, Administration, Policy & Standards, Land Records Reform and the Nova Scotia Geomatics Centre	10,648	10,354	294	Savings due to staff vacancies and other operating efficiencies.
Assessment Services Administration & Assessment Act, Assessment Appeal Process and Regional Assessment Offices	9,949	12,204	(2,255)	Over expenditure is related to the review model of Assessment Services and the defense of appeals on the Sable Gas Assessment Project.
Housing Services Architectural Design Engineering, Design, Administration, Property Management, Programs Administration, Cape Breton, Metro, and Western Regional Offices, Operational Support Services and Land Development Services	1,076	(621)	1,697	Savings due to staff vacancies and an increase in federal RRAP recoveries for administration of the program.
Subsidies Public Housing Subsidies, Home Ownership Program, Rural/Native Program, Home Repair Program, Special Housing Assistance, Private Non-Profit Program, New Home Buyers - HST, RRAP Homeowner Subsidies, Provision for Doubtful Accounts and Rent Supplement Program	12,393	13,339	(946)	Over expenditure is largely related to additional funds allocated towards Public Housing Subsidies.
Capital Grants Departmental Programs and Infrastructure Works Program	13,115	13,307	(192)	Over expenditure is related to the Department's commitment to fund the Town of Oxford Water Supply Project.
Program Expenditure **Tangible Capital Assets Adjustment** **Net Program Expenditure**	88,663 (130) 88,533	88,317 (58) 88,259	346 (72) 274	

8. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND APPENDICES

Currently the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is organized into five divisions:

- Service Delivery
- Registry and Information Management Services
- Alternate Program Delivery
- Municipal Services
- Program Management and Corporate Services

The following are the major services provided by each of the five divisions:

Service Delivery Division provides the majority of the direct interaction with customers on behalf of the Department. The Division is responsible for the Department Call Centre and Access Nova Scotia and Registry of Motor Vehicle offices across the province.

Registry and Information Management Services Division delivers six programs on behalf of the Department including geographic information services, property registration, information management services, business and consumer registrations, the Registry 2000 project and the Nova Scotia Business Registry.

Alternate Program Delivery Division is responsible for the development of partnerships to deliver services on behalf of other government departments and to manage arrangements with non-government agencies to deliver services on behalf of government. It also includes Assessment Services which prepares assessments for municipalities, files and defends the assessments across the province.

Municipal Services Division provides planning and advisory services related to municipal matters to the government and on behalf of the government to municipalities. The Division also operates many of the grant and other support programs offered to municipalities on behalf of the provincial government.

Program Management and Corporate Services Division provides the program development, enforcement and public awareness functions of the Department in the areas of driver and vehicle safety, consumer and business policy and support services such as facilities management, debt collection, policy development and quality assurance.

The Department has a significant regional presence with:

- 75% of staff in regional offices
- service offered in all 18 counties in 36 communities via 49 locations in 57 offices and dealt with over two million customer contacts last year.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
Organizational Chart